



Commissioner for
**Resources Safety
& Health**

Annual report

2022–23



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ISSN 2653-2832 (Online)

ISSN 2653-2824 (Print)

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To obtain a hard copy of the annual report, contact the Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health on +61 7 3096 6528 or commissioner@rshq.qld.gov.au.

Have your say

The Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health hopes you find this annual report informative. This report is part of the Commissioner's commitment to engage with all sectors of the resources industry to promote and protect the safety and health of people who may be affected by the operation of the industry.

The Commissioner welcomes any comments and feedback about the report. Please send your feedback to commissioner@rshq.qld.gov.au.

30 October 2023

The Honourable Scott Stewart MP
Minister for Resources
1 William Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

Dear Minister

In accordance with section 64 of the *Resources Safety and Health Queensland Act 2020*, I am pleased to submit to you the Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health annual report for the year ending 30 June 2023.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kate', followed by a long horizontal line.

Kate du Preez
Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health

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From the Commissioner

I am pleased to present the *Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health annual report for 2022–23*.

It has been three years since I was appointed to the role of Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health. The role is an important part of the accountability framework to manage safety and health in the resources industry in Queensland as it provides an independent monitoring, review and advisory function distinct and independent from Resources Safety and Health Queensland.

This report outlines the work achieved in 2022–23 in fulfilling the functions of the role, including:

- providing a trusted source of independent advice to the Minister on safety and health in the resources industry
- providing the Minister with independent advice on the performance of Resources Safety and Health Queensland's functions
- providing safety and health leadership for the Queensland resources industry
- engaging with industry peak bodies, resources industry operators and workers' representative organisations to understand the safety and health performance of the industry
- chairing and supporting the safety and health advisory committees to develop their ongoing five-year strategic plans for improving the safety and health of people at, or affected by, coal mining and mineral mining and quarrying operations with the aim of promoting a collaborative and cooperative industry.

In 2022–23, I was particularly proud of the work achieved to progress the *Queensland mining industry safety reporting survey*.

Over the past few decades, Queensland's mining industry has experienced many reviews, reports and inquiries which have made multiple recommendations about how safety and health should be managed. One of the common themes in these reports has been the limited availability of data on safety culture in the Queensland mining industry and the difficult task of evaluating conflicting anecdotal evidence in the absence of empirical evidence.

The *Queensland mining industry safety reporting survey* will go some way to addressing this deficiency by establishing a baseline of the safety reporting behaviours at mine sites and identifying key opportunities and barriers to achieving a responsive and effective safety reporting culture.

This type of survey, on this scale, has never been attempted in the Queensland mining industry before. The results will enable benchmarking of industry safety reporting culture and provide focus areas for industry and the advisory committees to target for further research and continuous improvement in the years ahead.

This is a milestone project for the industry and I would like to thank the many thousands of mine and quarry workers who participated in the survey for taking the time to share their thoughts. I would also like to thank the mine and quarry operators who helped facilitate the survey at their sites, particularly those who generously assisted in the completion of cognitive and pilot testing.

Other key achievements in 2022–23 included:

- ongoing support for the *Report for Safety* strategic engagement campaign
- commencement of an independent expert review of the effectiveness of Resources Safety and Health Queensland as a regulator in the context of recommendations made by the Queensland Coal Mining Board of Inquiry the Brady Review
- completion of an expert report examining fatigue and fatigue management in the Queensland mining industry and its relationship with mental health and safety outcomes
- fostering collaboration and dissemination of lessons learned by facilitating an industry workshop in collaboration with the Queensland Resources Council on dozer safety
- providing leadership and project management support and resources to assist the advisory committees in achieving the objectives outlined in their five-year strategic plans.

The program of work outlined in this report illustrates the significant progress made in advancing towards the mission I set in my strategic plan on the commencement of the role in 2020:

To provide effective leadership to the resources industry on safety and health and to advise the Minister on matters related to safety and health and the performance of the functions of the resources regulator.

Looking towards 2023–24, the key focus will be on improving safety and health outcomes for resource sector workers by exploring the results of the *Queensland mining industry safety reporting survey* and communicating the findings to industry to ensure that it has the opportunity to learn from the results and improve safety reporting practices. This survey presents a unique opportunity to gain deeper insights into safety reporting culture in the industry. It will provide the evidence, context and understanding of safety reporting culture that is needed to help continuously improve safety and health and is the next step on our journey towards a safer and healthier resources industry.

I would like to acknowledge the tremendous efforts of my small but effective team whose dedication ensures positive outcomes for all resource workers and who have assisted me in carrying out my functions through a defined strategy and scoped program of work.

I would also like to acknowledge the support and hard work of the members of the advisory committees and the various industry stakeholders who have contributed throughout the year. Their commitment to collaboration and engagement ensures that lessons are learned and continuous improvement is made across the resources industry.

Industry outlook

I am extremely saddened to report that there were three fatal incidents in the Queensland resources industry in 2022–23.

Dylan Langridge and Trevor Davis were fatally injured when the light vehicle they were in fell into a stope void in the underground workings of the Dugald River mine in North-West Queensland and opal miner Ronald Selig was fatally injured after falling from the roof of a workshop in Central West Queensland.

I would like to express my most sincere sympathies to the families, friends and colleagues of these men.

In addition, 107 workers in the resources industry sustained injuries that required hospital admission.

Serious accidents in the resources industry are unacceptable and are completely preventable. Every person who goes to work should be able to return home in the same condition in which they left. We have the knowledge, expertise and understanding to prevent serious accidents in our industry and we must thoroughly investigate the circumstances of serious accidents and high potential incidents to better understand the precursor events in order to prevent harm before it occurs.

Over the past 24 months, the resources industry has taken some significant steps on its safety journey and must continue to:

- find the right balance between the rapid advancement and adoption of new technologies, which will continue to transform every aspect of the resources industry, and practical critical control processes focussed on specific cases considering site characteristics
- embedding risk management processes that focus on hazards, risk management, critical controls and verifications, and the detailed review and investigation of incidents
- create an organisational climate which fosters a strong reporting culture which ensures workers feel psychologically safe and know that they are not just encouraged to report safety concerns, but are expected to do so, and are proactively supported in the process
- drive a safety and health focus that balances emerging health and wellbeing priorities with traditional physical safety strategies
- maintain an emphasis on tripartite collaboration between mine operators, mine workers' representatives, and government—working together is the most effective way to improve safety and health outcomes
- focus on attracting and fostering the best talent and attracting more people to work in our industry, including from non-traditional mining demographics and in non-traditional roles.

The resources industry's safety culture is maturing and we are on the journey towards becoming an industry that learns from its mistakes and shares the lessons with the broader industry to the benefit of all. Our industry is currently experiencing rapid advancements in technology, which can provide significant safety and health benefits, but we must ensure that our systems and the capabilities of our people keep pace with the changes.



Kate du Preez

Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health

About the Commissioner

Kate du Preez is Queensland's Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health. Mrs du Preez has almost 30 years of experience in the resources industry across Africa and Australia, including working in underground coal mines and in management positions. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Mining Engineering and was the first woman in South Africa to hold a mine manager's certificate of competency in coal mining. As a miner herself, Mrs du Preez is passionate about the resources industry and is a strong advocate for resources safety and health issues.



Year at a glance

Table 1: Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health key achievements for 2022–23

Objective	Key achievements
An informed Minister	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed and implemented, in conjunction with the advisory committees, the <i>Queensland mining industry safety reporting survey</i> which aims to understand the state of the safety reporting culture in the mining industry. • Published an expert report examining fatigue and fatigue management in the Queensland mining industry and its relationship with mental health and safety outcomes. • Considered a direction from the Minister to provide advice on the effectiveness of tripartite communication in coal mining safety and health and how it can be optimised. • Provided advice to the Minister regarding a recommendation of the Queensland Coal Mining Board of Inquiry that legislative amendments be made to ensure that a site senior executive for an underground coal mine must be the holder of a first-class certificate of competency.
Effective oversight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided timely, independent advice to the Minister on the performance of Resources Safety and Health Queensland by assessing performance against characteristics that define effective regulators in high-hazard industries. • Commenced an independent expert review of the effectiveness of Resources Safety and Health Queensland as a regulator in the context of recommendations made by the Queensland Coal Mining Board of Inquiry and the Brady Review.
An engaged industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued to chair, provide secretariat support, project management support and resources to the Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee and the Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee to achieve the objectives of their five-year strategic plans. • Engaged directly with stakeholders on safety and health issues to gather feedback about industry and regulator performance. • Participated as a member of the Mount Isa Lead Health Management Committee. • Proactively communicated with industry using a variety of communication channels including social media, website, videos and in-person presentations. • Continued to implement and support the <i>Report for Safety</i> strategic engagement campaign. • Collaborated with the Queensland Resources Council and a working group of site senior executives from coal mine operators to host a safety forum for coal mining senior leaders to discuss the management of dozer safety.

Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health

The Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health is appointed by the Governor in Council under the *Resources Safety and Health Queensland Act 2020*. The position commenced on 1 July 2020.

Commissioner's functions

The *Resources Safety and Health Queensland Act 2020* prescribes the following functions for the Commissioner:

- advise the Minister on matters relating to safety and health in the resources sector
- respond to requests by the Minister for advice on particular matters, including, for example, the strategic direction of Resources Safety and Health Queensland
- fulfil the following roles
 - chair of the Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee
 - chair of the Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee
- engage with representatives of the explosives sector and petroleum and gas sector about promoting and protecting the safety and health of persons who may be affected by the operation of those sectors
- monitor, review, and report to the Minister on the performance of Resources Safety and Health Queensland's functions.

The Commissioner has the power to do anything necessary or convenient to be done for the performance of the Commissioner's functions and, in doing so, must act independently, impartially and in the public interest.

The Commissioner is required under section 64 of the *Resources Safety and Health Queensland Act 2020* to provide a written report to the Minister for Resources about the operations of the Commissioner during each financial year.

The activities undertaken by the Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health in 2022–23 are summarised in the body of this report. In addition, information on the operations of the advisory committees can be obtained in the following reports:

- Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee annual report 2022–23
- Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee annual report 2022–23.

These reports can be downloaded from the Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health website at www.commissioner.rshq.qld.gov.au.

Vision and mission

The Commissioner's vision is:

Working together to improve safety and health in Queensland's resources industry.

To achieve this vision, the Commissioner is guided by the mission:

To provide effective leadership to the resources industry on safety and health and to advise the Minister on matters related to safety and health and the performance of the functions of the resources regulator.

Values

The Commissioner has four core values. These values underpin the work of the Commissioner and are supportive of the Queensland public service values:

- independence, integrity and impartiality
- transparency and accountability
- fairness, equity and accessibility
- collaboration and engagement.

Vision: Working together to improve safety and health in Queensland's resources industry

Mission: To provide effective leadership to the resources industry on safety and health and to advise the Minister on matters related to safety and health and the performance of the functions of the resources regulator

Values: Independence, integrity and impartiality | Transparency and accountability | Fairness, equity and accessibility | Collaboration and engagement

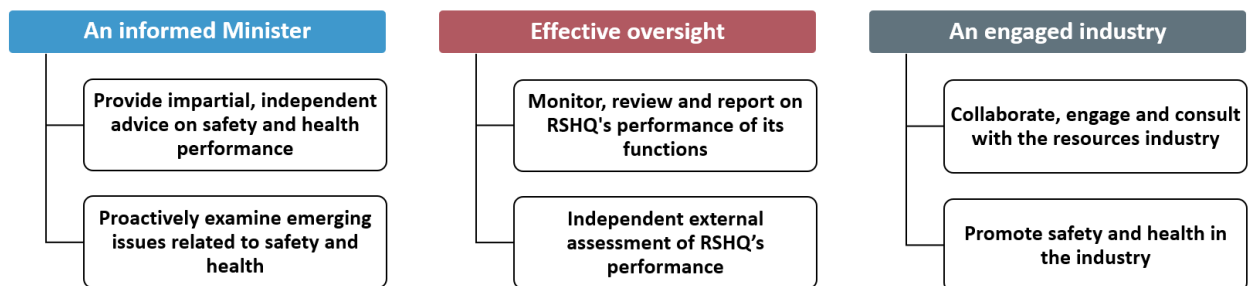


Figure 1: Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health strategic plan 2022–27

Relationships with government bodies

The Commissioner has relationships with other government bodies with decision-making powers established either by an Act of Parliament or by a decision of executive government. The following government bodies have functions or responsibilities relevant to the role of Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health:

- Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee
- Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee
- Resources Safety and Health Queensland.

Information on their operations can be obtained in their annual reports.

Commissioner's performance

In 2022–23, the Commissioner completed a range of projects and activities that were aligned to the three strategic objectives under the *Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health strategic plan 2022–27*:

- an informed Minister
- effective oversight
- an engaged industry.

An informed Minister

The Commissioner's primary function is to provide advice to the Minister on matters relating to safety and health in the resources industry.

The Commissioner proactively examines emerging issues related to safety and health and responds in a timely manner to requests from the Minister for advice, information and action.

The Commissioner's priority strategies for achieving this objective are to:

- provide impartial, independent advice on safety and health performance
- proactively examine emerging issues related to safety and health.

Safety reporting survey

In 2022–23, the Commissioner, in cooperation with the Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee and the Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee, developed and implemented the *Queensland mining industry safety reporting survey*.

The survey aims to establish a baseline of the safety reporting behaviours exhibited at mine sites and identify the key opportunities and

barriers to achieving a responsive and effective safety reporting culture. It also aims to enable benchmarking of industry safety reporting culture and provide focus areas for industry and the advisory committees to target for further research and continuous improvement.

The survey was driven by Finding 91 and Recommendation 28 of the *Queensland Coal Mining Board of Inquiry part 2 report*:¹

Finding 91—An extensive study undertaken by CSMHAC on reporting culture in coal mines would benefit the industry in Queensland.

Recommendation 28—As part of carrying out its functions under section 76A of the Act, CSMHAC considers including within its 5-year Strategic Plan activities that will facilitate improvements in the reporting culture in Queensland coal mines.

The advisory committees each formed a working group to provide guidance and input into the development of the survey project. The working groups included representation from:

- Australian Workers' Union
- Cement Concrete and Aggregates Australia
- Electrical Trades Union
- Mining and Energy Union
- Queensland Resources Council
- Resources Safety and Health Queensland.

¹ https://www.coalminesinquiry.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0014/1621211/Queensland-Coal-Mining-Board-of-Inquiry-Part-II-Report.pdf

The survey was adapted from the *Safety Culture Survey Tool* developed by Safer Together as a workforce engagement tool to provide industry with information about the overall safety behaviours of frontline workers, supervisors, and managers.

The survey questions were designed to understand a respondent's perceptions of the behaviours of members of their team, frontline supervisors and managers in relation to safety reporting culture.

When assessing the state of reporting culture in the mining industry, it is important to consider in tandem broader cultural issues around safety.

To do this, the survey is divided into themes to assess metrics on standards, communication, risk management, involvement, and reporting across the three levels of an organisation.

The survey questions have been categorised into 15 different topic areas as shown in Figure 2.

	MY TEAM	FRONTLINE LEADERS	SENIOR LEADERS
STANDARDS	Adhere to standards	Ensure compliance	Set high standards
COMMUNICATION	Speak up	Encourage the team	Communicate openly
RISK MANAGEMENT	Plan for safety	Promote risk awareness	Control for risk
INVOLVEMENT	Get involved	Involve the team	Involve the workforce
REPORTING	Report safety concerns	Support and promote	Encourage and action

Figure 2: Queensland mining industry safety reporting survey topic areas

To ensure the survey questions were robust and suitable, the Commissioner's office carried out cognitive testing at four Queensland mines:

- Curragh North (surface coal mine)
- Oaky North (underground coal mine)

- Mt Isa Mines (surface and underground mineral mine)
- Narangba Quarry.

Following cognitive testing, a pilot phase was launched in May 2023 at two sites to test the effectiveness of survey distribution and response methodologies:

- Cavil Ridge (surface coal mine)
- Coppabella and Moorvale (surface coal mine).

The survey was made available as either an online or paper-based survey and significant attention was made to ensure privacy and confidentiality of responses.

The survey opened on 1 June 2023 and was scheduled to run for approximately three months. A report is due to be published by December 2023.

The Commissioner and advisory committees aim to repeat the survey to encourage continuous improvement.

Fatigue management

In 2022–23, the Commissioner engaged The University of Queensland to provide an expert report examining fatigue and fatigue management in the Queensland mining industry and its relationship with mental health and safety outcomes.

The project established a fatigue management baseline by conducting a targeted review of current information about fatigue management from regulatory, industry, and academic sources.

An analysis of incident data was also performed to better understand fatigue as a hazard in the Australian mining industry and a gap analysis was completed to assess the likely effectiveness of existing fatigue

management processes at a selection of mine sites. Literature reviews in mining then explored the relationships between fatigue, health and safety, and mental health.

The review found that fatigue is rarely reported as contributing to notifiable incidents in mining. The report estimated that 0.5 per cent of all incidents reviewed from New South Wales (2018–2022), 1.7 per cent from Western Australia (2010–2020), and 2.5 per cent from Queensland (2011–2021) included fatigue as a factor. The most frequently reported fatigue-related incidents involved heavy vehicles on surface mines.

Extended analysis of incidents in Queensland showed that more incidents occurred in the last few hours of a shift than in the earlier hours of a shift and evidence did not support fatigue accumulation effects.

The report examined the gaps in current Queensland fatigue risk management guidance relative to leading practice including a comparison in bow-tie format of the controls from *QGN16 Guidance for fatigue risk management* and those in more recent guidance documents.

Overall, the changes show a general maturing in the mining industry's understanding and management of risks associated with fatigue. However, the report found that while it is recognised that industry has made considerable progress in the area of fatigue management additional controls based on leading practice elsewhere are possible.

These additional controls, which could potentially be incorporated into future versions of a Queensland fatigue risk management guidance note, include a better consideration of mental health outcomes, a greater use of fatigue detection technologies,

and addressing the challenges sometimes faced when Queensland workplaces wish to implement fatigue management controls but are complicated by mandated thresholds for agreement in consultation processes.

The second part of the report investigated the relationships between fatigue, health and safety, and mental health within the mining industry.

It found that numerous compounding factors in the workplace and in home life contribute to worker fatigue and mental illness, but research in this area has been limited. There is some evidence which shows the relationship between fatigue and mental illness is bi-directional, with one usually leading to the other.

In communicating the findings of the report, the Commissioner chaired two workshop sessions on fatigue at the *Queensland Mining Industry Health and Safety Conference 2022* to engage with industry to explore opportunities to exchange information and foster proactive safety and health management techniques related to fatigue management.

The Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee is planning to host a fatigue forum in March 2024 to provide an opportunity for industry, universities, fatigue experts and mining industry unions to collaborate to further understand the advances in technology, knowledge gaps and potential practical solutions.

Inquiry into coal mining industry safety

In February 2023, the Queensland Parliament Transport and Resources Committee published its *Inquiry into coal mining industry safety* report which made 11 recommendations.

In his response to the report, the Minister advised he had directed the Commissioner to provide him with advice on recommendation 3.

Recommendation 3—The Minister consider what forums and mechanisms can be used to improve the quality of tripartite communication around Queensland coal mining safety and health.

The Minister directed the Commissioner to provide advice about the effectiveness of tripartite communication and how it can be optimised by 1 September 2023.

In addition, five recommendations were directed at, or affected the work of, the Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee (recommendations 2, 4, 5, 8 and 9).

Queensland Coal Mining Board of Inquiry recommendations

The Queensland Coal Mining Board of Inquiry recommended that legislative amendments be made to ensure that a site senior executive for an underground coal mine must be the holder of a first-class certificate of competency.

In providing advice to the Minister, the Commissioner examined the practical implementation of this recommendation across Queensland underground coal mining operations including:

- the role of the site senior executive as the leader of the operation covering not only safety and health, but also environmental compliance, community expectations, and driving the culture and overall governance of the mine
- the fundamental obligations of a site senior executive to establish a safety and health management system and

then to resource appropriately to ensure the risk to persons from coal mining operations is at an acceptable level

- the requirement for a site senior executive to establish a management structure for the mine which will include an underground mine manager
- whether similar competency requirements exist in other jurisdictions
- the available evidence to show whether there would be improvements to safety and health in Queensland's underground coal mines as a result of any proposed legislative changes
- concerns regarding the practical application of the proposal due to a potential shortage of first class mine managers and pathway first class mine managers.

In addition, the Commissioner considered whether the intention of the proposed changes was already being met through existing legislation—under section 76A(a)(i) of the *Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999*, the Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee has the function of establishing the competencies qualifying a person to perform the tasks prescribed by regulation.

Activities of the Commissioner

The Commissioner regularly advises the Minister for Resources and Ministerial staff on the activities of the office of the Commissioner and the outcomes of projects and activities.

In 2022–23, the Commissioner met regularly with the Minister and his advisors to provide advice about safety and health performance in the resources industry and requested data and information from Resources Safety and Health

Queensland to review trends in safety and health outcomes.

The Commissioner prepared a budget of estimated costs, as per the requirements of the legislation, and regularly briefed the Minister on progress against the strategic plan. The Commissioner also prepared and gave the Minister an annual report on the operations and effective performance of the functions of the role.

Effective oversight

The Commissioner has the function of monitoring, reviewing and reporting to the Minister on the performance of Resources Safety and Health Queensland's functions.

The Commissioner also engages external experts to assess certain aspects of the performance of Resources Safety and Health Queensland.

Monitor, review and report on regulator's performance

In 2022–23, the Commissioner independently reviewed the activity of Resources Safety and Health Queensland and provided regular briefings to the Minister for Resources.

In achieving this objective, the Commissioner assesses performance against the 11 characteristics that define effective regulators in high-hazard industries. These characteristics are typical of effective safety and health regulators that oversee a wide range of safety and health issues. At different times, the Commissioner may focus on specific characteristics depending on current industry and regulatory conditions.

In reviewing Resources Safety and Health Queensland's activity, the Commissioner:

- met regularly with the Resources Safety and Health Queensland chief executive officer and chief inspectors
- met regularly with industry operators and worker representatives
- accompanied inspectors on site visits
- sought external feedback from worker representatives and coal mine, mineral mine and quarry, explosives, and petroleum and gas operators
- reviewed Resources Safety and Health Queensland documentation, projects and initiatives
- reviewed compliance and enforcement programs and activities
- assessed the dissemination of lessons learned and industry consultation by
 - reviewing outputs of inspection activity such as audits, reports, safety alerts, mine record entries and sector specific engagements
 - attending industry forums and conferences to observe industry engagement first hand.

Review of effectiveness of regulator

In 2022–23, the Commissioner engaged independent experts to review the performance of Resources Safety and Health Queensland's functions.

The review assessed key aspects of an effective regulator, including resource allocation, capability and consultation, and implementation progress of several recommendations from both the Queensland Coal Mining Board of Inquiry and the *Review of*

all fatal accidents in Queensland mines and quarries from 2000 to 2019 by Dr Sean Brady.

Information for the review was gathered by conducting interviews with various members of the inspectorate and other senior members of Resources Safety and Health Queensland, reviewing relevant documentation, and observing the conduct of a number of meetings. Interviews with the New South Wales Mine Safety Inspectorate were also held to provide context and reference to a comparable regulator.

The review is expected to be completed in 2023–24.

An engaged industry

The Commissioner aims to provide effective leadership to the resources industry on safety and health.

In achieving this, the Commissioner seeks to engage with all sectors of the resources industry to improve collaboration and consultation and to promote and protect the safety and health of people who may be affected by the operation of the industry.

One critical way that the Commissioner engages with industry, workforce and government stakeholders in the coal mining and mineral mining and quarrying industries is by chairing the two mining safety and health advisory committees—Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee and the Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee—and providing the support and resources necessary to achieve their five-year strategic plans.

The Commissioner is committed to improving tripartite collaboration and consultation across, and between, resources industry operators, workers and the regulator.

The Commissioner engaged directly with stakeholders in the coal mining, mineral mining and quarrying, explosives, and petroleum and gas sectors to consider the current issues related to safety and health.

The Commissioner aims to ensure that all stakeholders from the wide diversity in operations and locations have an equitable voice in the regulation of the resources industry and actively promotes safety and health by communicating across the industry on safety and health issues and proactively examining emerging issues.

Chair the advisory committees

In 2022–23, the Commissioner chaired four meetings and six out-of-session meetings of the Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee and four meetings and five out-of-session meetings of the Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee. The Commissioner also provided resources to enable each of the advisory committees to implement the programs and projects outlined in their individual five-year strategic plans.

The primary function of the advisory committees is to give advice and make recommendations to the Minister about promoting and protecting the safety and health of persons at coal mines and mineral mines and quarries and persons who may be affected by coal mining and mineral mining and quarrying operations.

The advisory committees each focussed their efforts on achieving four key strategic objectives:

- a safe and healthy workplace
- maintain a competent workforce
- an informed industry
- an effective advisory committee.

Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee

In 2022–23, the advisory committee:

- developed and implemented the *Queensland mining industry safety reporting survey*
- explored the application of process safety methodology in the coal mining industry
- considered the five recommendations of the Transport and Resources Committee *Inquiry into coal mining industry safety* report
- considered the findings of an expert report examining fatigue and fatigue management in the Queensland mining industry and its relationship with mental health and safety outcomes
- observed and reviewed relevant safety and health information and data
- endorsed a recommendation from Resources Safety and Health Queensland to establish a new diesel particulate matter workplace exposure standard for coal mines
- considered Safe Work Australia's decision to reduce the workplace exposure standard for respirable crystalline silica
- considered four recognised standards
- advised the Minister on the *Facilitating High Reliability Organisation behaviours in Queensland's Resources Sector and Modernising Regulatory Enforcement* consultation regulatory impact statement
- advised the Minister on the feasibility of a proposal from the Electrical Trades Union to amend the *Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999* and the *Mining*

and Quarrying Safety and Health Act 1999 to allow entry permit holders under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* the ability to access workshops, shutdowns and construction sites on mining leases

- engaged Simtars to complete a review of the Queensland coal mining competencies
- reviewed and updated competency requirements for site senior executives at surface and underground coal mines
- informed the Minister about emerging issues, their potential impact and proactive best practice safety and health activities
- updated the five-year strategic plan and action plan
- developed and maintained communication management plans to support strategic objectives.

Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee

In 2022–23, the advisory committee:

- developed and implemented the *Queensland mining industry safety reporting survey*
- developed and published the *Risk assessment education resource*
- explored the application of process safety methodology in the mineral mining and quarrying industries
- considered the findings of an expert report examining fatigue and fatigue management in the Queensland mining industry and its relationship with mental health and safety outcomes

- considered Safe Work Australia’s decision to reduce the workplace exposure standard for respirable crystalline silica
- observed and reviewed relevant safety and health information and data
- advised the Minister regarding amendments to the Mining and Quarrying Safety and Health Regulation 2017 to establish new blood lead level thresholds, airborne lead level thresholds and monitoring and reporting requirements for mine operators
- advised the Minister on the *Facilitating High Reliability Organisation behaviours in Queensland’s Resources Sector and Modernising Regulatory Enforcement* consultation regulatory impact statement
- advised the Minister on the on the feasibility of a proposal from the Electrical Trades Union to amend the *Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999* and the *Mining and Quarrying Safety and Health Act 1999* to allow entry permit holders under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* the ability to access workshops, shutdowns and construction sites on mining leases
- engaged Simtars to complete a review of the Queensland mineral mining and quarrying competencies
- reviewed competency requirements for site senior executives and site safety and health representatives
- informed the Minister about emerging issues, their potential impact and

proactive best practice safety and health activities

- updated the five-year strategic plan and action plan
- developed and maintained communication management plans to support strategic objectives.

Report for Safety campaign

The Commissioner continued to implement and support the *Report for Safety* strategic engagement campaign which aims to promote a positive safety reporting culture in the Queensland resources industry.

In 2022–23, the Commissioner launched an additional 14 video interviews² with experienced, knowledgeable and respected people within the resources industry, as well as specialist content experts.

The campaign was supported using the Commissioner’s existing communication and social media channels with 42 social media posts accounting for more than 48,000 post impressions and 8300 video views across Facebook and LinkedIn.

The Commissioner will continue to support the campaign in 2023–24.

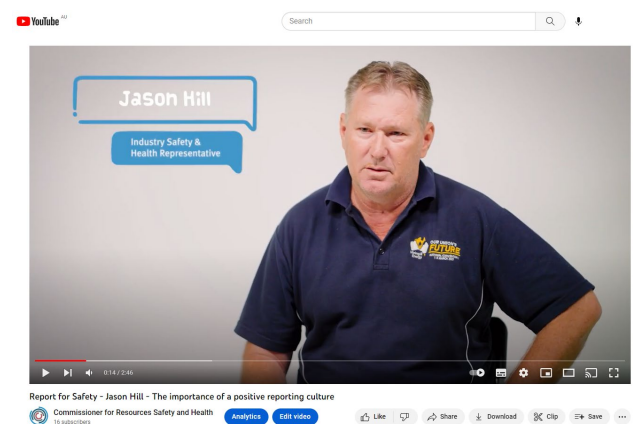


Figure 3: Report for Safety campaign YouTube video

² www.youtube.com/channel/UCIGBSRQdo6Fx71n5P0_5qaw

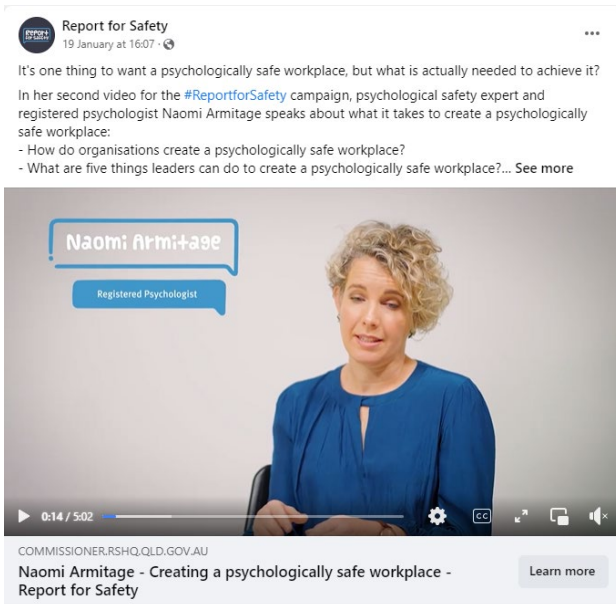


Figure 4: Report for Safety campaign Facebook post

Industry forum on dozer safety

The Commissioner works closely with industry peak bodies to promote best practice to protect the safety and health of people who may be affected by the operation of the resources industry.

In 2022–23, the Commissioner collaborated with the Queensland Resources Council and a working group of site senior executives from coal mine operators to host a safety forum for coal mining senior leaders to discuss the management of dozer safety.

The forum was attended by site senior executives and other safety leaders from across the coal mining industry and considered dozer safety related to risk assessments, critical controls and practical strategies that could be implemented to improve safety outcomes for dozer operations in the short, medium and long term.

Workplace culture risks

Following on from the June 2022 industry forum on workplace culture risks—including sexual harassment, bullying and discrimination—hosted by the Commissioner and the Queensland Resources Council, the Commissioner engaged with industry peak bodies to examine how this issue is currently being managed across the industry.

In 2022–23, Australian Energy Producers—formerly the Australian Petroleum Production and Exploration Association—asked Safer Together to draft a psychosocial safety section for its coal seam gas camp guidance.

The Commissioner continued to engage with Safer Together to monitor the development of the new guidance to camps and to assess if there are any further opportunities for industry collaboration.

In developing the resource, Safer Together considered the outcomes of the Western Australia Parliament’s Community Development and Justice Standing Committee inquiry into sexual harassment against women in the FIFO mining industry.³

Stakeholder direct engagement

An important element of the Commissioner’s engagement strategy is directly engaging with stakeholders from the resources industry to collaborate on safety and health issues and to gather feedback about industry and regulator performance and current issues and concerns.

In 2022–23, the Commissioner attended 29 mining, petroleum and gas, and explosives industry events and delivered presentations at 14 of those events, including at the World

³ [https://parliament.wa.gov.au/parliament/commit.nsf/\(InqByName\)/E5F7ABD1C551FEEC4825870A0027A60E?OpenDocument#Details](https://parliament.wa.gov.au/parliament/commit.nsf/(InqByName)/E5F7ABD1C551FEEC4825870A0027A60E?OpenDocument#Details)

Mining Congress, Mine Electrical Safety Conference, Quarrying and Mining Safety and Health Conference and the Queensland Mining Industry Health and Safety Conference.

The Commissioner visited 10 resources industry sites—five coal mines, three mineral mines, one quarry and one petroleum and gas site—to gain a better understanding of current safety and health issues and to engage with workers and industry stakeholders directly in their workplaces.

The Commissioner also hosted an industry forum in Moranbah with coal mining industry executives as an opportunity to discuss current issues related to safety and health.

In addition, the Commissioner continued regular engagement meetings with peak bodies including Queensland Resources Council, Australian Energy Producers, Cement Concrete and Aggregates Australia, International Society of Explosives Engineers, mining industry unions including the Mining and Energy Union and Australian Workers' Union, and government bodies including Resources Safety and Health Queensland. This included regular presentations at four Cement Concrete and Aggregates Australia Occupational Health and Safety Sub-Committee meetings, three Queensland Resources Council Health and Safety Standing Committee meetings, and one Safer Together Safety Leaders Group meeting.

The Commissioner also engaged with relevant research and subject matter experts including The University of Queensland's Sustainable Minerals Institute, Safer Together and Simtars.

The Commissioner is a member of the advisory board of The University of Queensland's Minerals Industry Safety and Health Centre.

Figure 5 and Figure 6 show the number and proportion of direct, in-person engagements during the year.

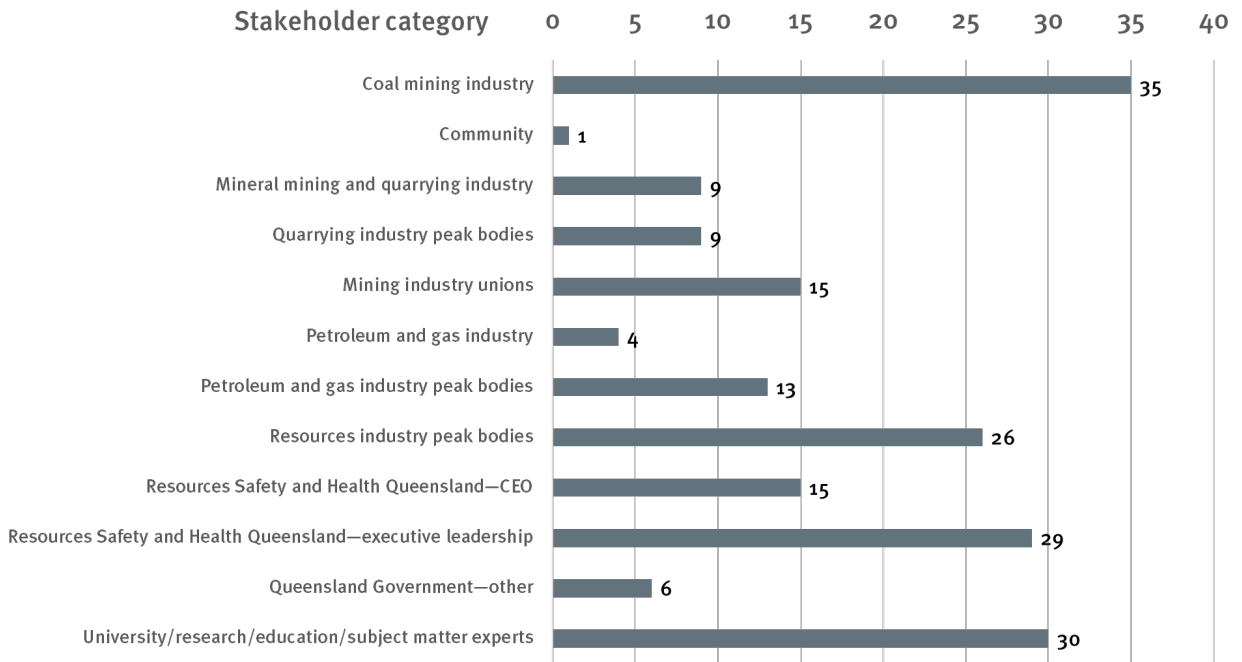


Figure 5: Number of direct engagements with stakeholders in 2022–23 by stakeholder category

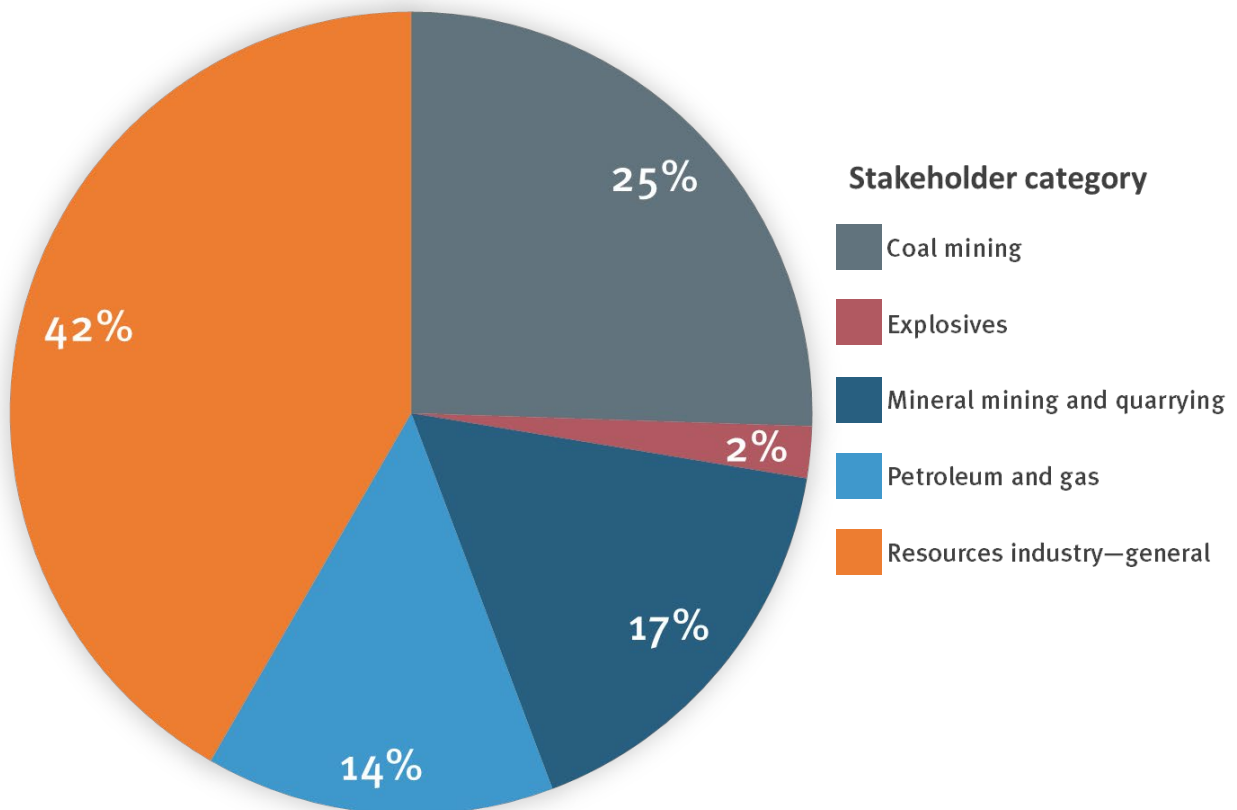


Figure 6: Proportion of direct engagement with stakeholders in 2022–23 by industry sector⁴

⁴ Resources industry—general includes organisations that are not specific to one sector of the industry (e.g. Queensland Resources Council)

Mount Isa Lead Health Management Committee

The Commissioner remains a committed member of the Mount Isa Lead Health Management Committee and supports its continued action to achieve sustainable improvement in the health of the Mount Isa community.

The Queensland Chief Health Officer is the chair of the committee and members represent Queensland Government agencies, Glencore Mount Isa Mines, Queensland and Federal Members of Parliament, and Mount Isa City Council.

The committee made progress in the implementation of the *Lead Health Management Strategic Plan* by aligning a range of projects and activities to the five strategic priorities. The strategic plan was developed in consultation with primary stakeholders, including the North West Hospital and Health Service, the Townsville Public Health Unit, the Department of Environment and Science, and the Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health.

Some of the key programs included the progression of establishing a single collaborative Lead Hub to coordinate and integrate lead health care management of young children. This has also included the progression of the employment of three additional staff members and the purchase of new equipment. The Lead Health Management Subcommittee has also continued to promote lead health and hygiene awareness across successful programs such as *Backyard Improvement Awards* and *LeadSmart Community Engagement and Education*.

The Commissioner will continue to work collaboratively with the regulator, industry operators, resources workers and other government agencies to support the Mount Isa Lead Alliance to continue to assist the community in working towards a safe and healthier lifestyle for the Mount Isa community.

In 2022–23, the Commissioner contributed \$29,437 to funding the Mount Isa Lead Alliance.

Level 1 emergency exercise

The Commissioner continues to support the annual coal mining industry Level 1 mine emergency exercise by making staff available to participate as assessors.

In 2022–23, two staff members participated as assessors in the exercise which was held on 23 November 2022 at Carborough Downs coal mine in Central Queensland.

All Queensland underground coal mines must run annual simulations to test their readiness for emergencies. In addition to their own exercises, each year one mine hosts the state's Level 1 emergency exercise. These exercises have been held annually since 1998 and are monitored by assessors from the Queensland and New South Wales coal mining community.

Proactive communication across the industry

The Commissioner promotes safety and health in the industry by proactively communicating with stakeholders across the industry and examining emerging issues related to safety and health.

In 2022–23, the Commissioner continued to implement a strategic communications and engagement plan to establish a coordinated model of communication which informs,

educates and encourages stakeholders to engage with the Commissioner on resources safety and health.

The Commissioner continued to develop key communication channels, including a dedicated website and social media presence, and engaged face-to-face with stakeholders on a formal and informal basis via professional events and resources industry site visits.

Social media

The Commissioner continued to use LinkedIn⁵ to communicate with professional, operational and technical workers in the resources industry.

Regular updates have been posted⁶ informing industry stakeholders about the Commissioner's current projects and providing information about safety and health in the industry. The number of followers⁷ has steadily increased over that time.

Social media affords the opportunity for the Commissioner to engage directly with target audiences in the resources industry and to amplify key messages through the personal networks of highly engaged stakeholders.

Website

The Commissioner has continued to develop a dedicated website⁸ with information about the role of the Commissioner and the advisory committees. The website is used to regularly communicate and publish information about the Commissioner's projects and activities.

The Commissioner aimed to publish one news article per month on the website. In 2022–23, a total of 16 articles were published.

⁵ <https://www.linkedin.com/showcase/queensland-commissioner-for-resources-safety-&-health->

⁶ The total number of posts for 2022–23 was 51.

⁷ The total number of followers at the end of 2022–23 was 999.

⁸ www.commissioner.rshq.qld.gov.au

Governance

The Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health maintains a small office in Brisbane.

Staffing

The Commissioner does not directly employ staff.

Section 62 of the *Resources Safety and Health Queensland Act 2020* provides for the Commissioner to arrange for the services of officers or employees of a government agency to be made available to the Commissioner. Any such arrangement is to be made with the agreement of the chief executive of the government agency.

The Commissioner maintained a small multidisciplinary workforce composed of five full-time staff. All staff made available were employees of Resources Safety and Health Queensland. This included a temporary senior project officer employed in 2022–23 to assist with ongoing project work, including the development and implementation of the *Queensland mining industry safety reporting survey*.

All staff completed professional development plans and were encouraged to undertake further development opportunities, including attending conferences, industry events and safety and health exercises.

Conflicts of interest

Under section 57 of the *Resources Safety and Health Queensland Act 2020*, if the Commissioner has an interest that conflicts, or may conflict, with the discharge of the Commissioner's responsibilities, the Commissioner must:

- disclose the nature of the interest and conflict to the Minister as soon as practicable after the relevant facts come to the Commissioner's knowledge
- not take action or further action concerning a matter that is, or may be, affected by the conflict unless authorised by the Minister.

In 2022–23, the Commissioner did not disclose any conflicts of interest to the Minister.

External accountability

Under the *Resources Safety and Health Queensland Act 2020*, the Commissioner is accountable to the Minister for Resources.

Looking ahead

In 2023–24, the Commissioner will continue to build on the success achieved over the past three years to provide effective leadership to the resources industry on safety and health and to advise the Minister on matters related to safety and health and the performance of the functions of Resources Safety and Health Queensland.

The Commissioner will continue to implement the key activities of the *Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health strategic plan 2022–27* to achieve the following objectives:

- an informed Minister
- effective oversight
- an engaged industry.

A key priority for the Commissioner is the continued implementation of industry strategic engagement activities centred around:

- ensuring the results of the *Queensland mining industry safety reporting survey* are communicated to industry to enable benchmarking of industry safety reporting culture and to provide focus areas for industry and the advisory committees to target for further research and continuous improvement by
 - engaging data and behavioural analysis statistical experts to investigate the data qualitatively and assess the *why* of the results
 - working with the advisory committees to expand upon the findings from the safety reporting survey data by performing deep dive research into key themes identified in the survey results
 - holding workshops or forums to facilitate industry discussion and engagement in survey findings
 - engaging with industry to generate future support for follow up rounds of the safety reporting survey to enable safety trends to be assessed over time
- continuing the *Report for Safety* worker engagement campaign to improve the reporting culture in the industry by sharing video interviews with experienced, knowledgeable and respected people from the resource industry
- exploring the reported challenges the mining industry faces in attracting and retaining staff at all levels, noting a considerable shortage of skilled workers coming into the industry, as well as a loss of workforce in recent years—this will provide a greater understanding of the current issues and opportunities using a human-centred approach
- examining the competencies that may be required to meet the challenges and opportunities posed by the rapid advancements in technology across the resources industry.

A further key priority will be to continue to assess the performance of Resources Safety and Health including:

- that the regulator has sufficient resources and skilled people to fulfil its functions
- the extent to which it has adopted a risk-based approach to protecting the safety and health of people who work in and are affected by the resources industry
- its effectiveness in providing advice and information to industry related to analysing and disseminating the lessons learned from incidents.

Financial snapshot

Under the *Resources Safety and Health Queensland Act 2020*, it is a requirement that the Commissioner prepare by 31 March each year, in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer of Resources Safety and Health Queensland, a budget of estimated costs of the Commissioner for the next financial year.

Funding

The funding for the Commissioner is sourced from regulatory fees paid by industry participants under legislation specific to the mining, quarrying, explosives, and petroleum and gas industries.

Budget of estimated costs for 2022–23

The Commissioner's budget of estimated costs for 2022–23 was **\$1,995,830**. No amendments to the budget were made during the year.

Revenue from regulatory fees is collected and administered by Resources Safety and Health Queensland and funds the Commissioner's budget. The full Resources Safety and Health Queensland audited financial statements are available in its 2022–23 annual report.⁹

⁹ <https://www.rshq.qld.gov.au/about-us/resources/publications/annual-report>

Expenditure

Table 2: Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health expenditure for 2022–23

Expenditure for the period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023	
Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health budget for 2022–23	<u>1,995,830</u>
Expenses from operations	
Employee expenses	1,146,839
Supplies and services	773,564
Grants and subsidies	29,438
Other expenses	<u>7,520</u>
Total expenses from operations	<u>1,957,361</u>
Variance from budget	<u><u>38,469</u></u>

Appendix 1 Compliance checklist

Summary of requirement	Basis for requirement	Annual report reference
Letter of compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A letter of compliance from the accountable officer or statutory body to the relevant Minister/s 	ARRs – section 7 iii
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Table of contents 	ARRs – section 9.1 iv
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public availability 	ARRs – section 9.2 ii
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interpreter service statement 	Queensland Government Language Services Policy ARRs – section 9.3 ii
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copyright notice 	<i>Copyright Act 1968</i> ARRs – section 9.4 ii
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information Licensing 	QGEA – Information Licensing ARRs – section 9.5 ii
General information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introductory Information 	ARRs – section 10 2
Non-financial performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government's objectives for the community and whole-of-government plans/specific initiatives 	ARRs – section 11.1 N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency objectives and performance indicators 	ARRs – section 11.2 7
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency service areas and service standards 	ARRs – section 11.3 8
Financial performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summary of financial performance 	ARRs – section 12.1 26
Governance – management and structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisational structure 	ARRs – section 13.1 N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive management 	ARRs – section 13.2 N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government bodies (statutory bodies and other entities) 	ARRs – section 13.3 8
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Sector Ethics 	<i>Public Sector Ethics Act 1994</i> ARRs – section 13.4 N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human Rights 	<i>Human Rights Act 2019</i> ARRs – section 13.5 N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Queensland public service values 	ARRs – section 13.6 N/A
Governance – risk management and accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk management 	ARRs – section 14.1 N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit committee 	ARRs – section 14.2 N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal audit 	ARRs – section 14.3 N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External scrutiny 	ARRs – section 14.4 N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information systems and recordkeeping 	ARRs – section 14.5 N/A
Governance – human resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information Security attestation 	ARRs – section 14.6 N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic workforce planning and performance 	ARRs – section 15.1 23
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early retirement, redundancy and retrenchment 	Directive No.04/18 Early Retirement, Redundancy and Retrenchment ARRs – section 15.2 N/A
Open Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statement advising publication of information 	ARRs – section 16 N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultancies 	ARRs – section 31.1 https://data.qld.gov.au
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overseas travel 	ARRs – section 31.2 https://data.qld.gov.au
Financial statements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Queensland Language Services Policy 	ARRs – section 31.3 https://data.qld.gov.au
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Certification of financial statements 	FAA – section 62 FPMS – sections 38, 39 and 46 ARRs – section 17.1 N/A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Independent Auditor's Report 	FAA – section 62 FPMS – section 46 ARRs – section 17.2 N/A

FAA *Financial Accountability Act 2009*

FPMS *Financial and Performance Management Standard 2019*

ARRs Annual report requirements for Queensland Government agencies



Commissioner for
**Resources Safety
& Health**

